



May 12, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

I have had the pleasure of working with Richard Say as his student teaching supervisor for the past semester. During that time I have observed Rick teach eighth grade Civics at Muhlenberg Middle School and eleventh grade Economics at Antietam Middle-Senior High School, both in Berks County, PA. Having seen Rick teach numerous times, I have always been impressed with his in-depth understanding of social studies subject material.


Rick has a strong work ethic combined with a thorough understanding of the way our government and monetary system work, and he is able to explain these institutions to students of varying ages, embellished with his own life experience or examples from current events. In addition, he acquires outside materials, both hard copy and internet resources, to augment the lesson. I have seen him cruise through congressional websites to illustrate specific points, incorporate materials obtained from the Federal Reserve, and utilize lessons from his prior experience with Junior Achievement.

Rick truly cares about students, and he doesn't stereotype them in an ability-level caste system. Discussing with me a section of middle school students who were classified as non-academic, he said, "Some of the kids in there are really smart!" Rick believes that all children can learn. However, during his student teaching, he created equitable learning opportunities by developing lessons and tests which were appropriate for varying ability levels.

Having completed his middle school teaching experience relatively easily, Rick found his high school placement more challenging: an intensive schedule which contained 80-minute periods that met only every other day. The students, too, being typical high school students, were not naturally enthusiastic about economics, and could be, at times, actively or passively disengaged. Rick worked very hard to develop rapport with his students as well as lessons that were relevant to their lives and therefore engaging. He has learned much and is still learning in this area. Setting clear expectations and working for maximum student engagement as well as utilizing instructional time to its fullest will be clear priorities in Rick's future classroom.

Rick Say brings to the table a true caring for young people, a wealth of knowledge in his subject area, an exceptional work ethic, and the desire to teach. He is an excellent professional role model, possessing class, character, and integrity. He has the potential to become a fine educator; I recommend him to you. If I can be of further assistance, please contact me at 610-927-9953.

Sincerely,


Cheryl Witmer Yocum, Ed. D.
Supervisor of Student Teachers